

RECOGNIZING JEREMY HILTON  
FOR HIS ADVOCACY OF MILI-  
TARY FAMILIES AFFECTED BY  
DISABILITIES

### HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 17, 2012*

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Jeremy Hilton, of Burke, a U.S. Air Force finalist for the 2012 Military Spouse of the Year. Mr. Hilton is a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy and a Navy veteran. In 2002, Mr. Hilton was stationed in Navy Yard Washington, D.C. when his daughter, Kate, was born with significant medical issues. Given the longer deployments required of naval officers, Mr. Hilton chose to separate in order to care for Kate, his two-year-old son, Jack, and support his wife, Renae, who is stationed at Andrews AFB.

Mr. Hilton has made it his mission to advocate for military families impacted by a disability, and he has taken on several leadership roles to help military and non-military families on issues including medical care, long-term care, Medicaid, and special education. He spends much of his free time speaking and advocating for legislation. Mr. Hilton has become a respected authority on issues involving military families with special needs and disabilities. He has briefed the White House, the Congressional Military Family Caucus, and the staff for several Congressional committees.

Mr. Hilton was instrumental in bringing attention to major inadequacies in the U.S. Air Force Exceptional Family Member Program. He and fifteen other Air Force families organized support for a Department of Defense Inspector General report that played a major role in reforming the program. Mr. Hilton also worked with Congressional staff on provisions in the 2011 National Defense Authorization Act to institute feedback from disability-impacted military families to the Department of Defense, establishing the Military Exceptional Family Member Panel. Currently, Mr. Hilton is working to gather support on H.R. 2288, the "Caring for Military Kids with Autism Act."

When not caring for his family or working to improve the lives of other families, Mr. Hilton spends the remaining hours of the day working toward a graduate degree at the George Washington University and producing a video series titled *Creating Access for All*, which encourages churches to start disability ministries.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Jeremy Hilton and his sacrifice, service and passionate advocacy for both military and non-military families impacted by disabilities. I believe there to be few others more deserving of the 2012 Military Spouse of the Year.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. MICK MULVANEY

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 17, 2012*

Mr. MULVANEY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 65, I missed rollcall 65 on February 16, 2012. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT M. O'NEIL

### HON. JOHN W. OLVER

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 17, 2012*

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life's work of Robert M. O'Neil, a lifelong resident of Pittsfield, Massachusetts who has served his community in many capacities, including service Pittsfield residents as a teacher at Taconic High School since 1996. He and his beloved wife, Betty O'Neil, raised one daughter, Angela, and enjoyed the company of 22 nephews and nieces.

Mr. O'Neil started a long career as a girls' basketball coach at the Catholic Youth Center, Pittsfield Boys and Girls Club and with AAU teams. He also refereed countless games since 1987 and was Assistant Girls Basketball Coach at Pittsfield High School from 1995 until 2005. At various times his Pittsfield teams won the City Championship, League Championship, Berkshire County Championship, Western Massachusetts Championship, and appeared in the Massachusetts State Championship Final. He then became Head Girls Basketball Coach at Taconic High School in 2005 and served in that capacity until 2011. During his career, he was named the recipient of the Berkshire County Sportsman of the Year and radio station WBEC's Girls Coach of the Year, and on two different occasions was named Girls Basketball Coach of the Year by his peers.

Robert M. O'Neil has unselfishly devoted his life to improving the lives of students and basketball players and their families. On February 21, 2012, his life will be celebrated, and he will be given a Certificate of Recognition and the Key to the City of Pittsfield in deep appreciation for his distinguished service, and that date will be known forever as Robert M. O'Neil Day in Pittsfield. Mr. Speaker, I join my friends, colleagues and neighbors in commemorating his life and wonderful accomplishments.

RED TAIL PILOTS TRIBUTE EVENT  
HOSTED BY THE YMCA OF CENTRAL  
FLORIDA AND LOCKHEED  
MARTIN

### HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 17, 2012*

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Central Florida YMCA for their "Red Tail Pilots Tribute" event to congratulate the Tuskegee Airmen.

I am very pleased to talk about the pioneers who laid the groundwork for what we as African Americans have been able to accomplish over the last 70 years. In fact, when President Roosevelt began training African American troops, the Tuskegee Airmen excelled in protecting the bombers attacking enemy positions better than any other units in the United States Army Air Force.

And every single one of the first class of pilots of what became known as the Tuskegee Airmen had a college degree. One of them was Benjamin O. Davis, a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point,

who became the first African American to earn 3 stars in the United States Air Force.

In 1940, the Selective Service and Training Service Act, enacting the first peace-time draft in the United States' history was signed into law by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Under the Act, all American males between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five years had to register for the draft . . . and it went on to say "there shall be no discrimination against any person on account of race or color."

Following this, the first aviation class at the Tuskegee Institute with 13 cadets began in 1941. In March 1942, five of the 13 cadets in the first class completed the Army Air Corps pilot training program and earned their silver wings and became the nation's first black military pilots.

Soon afterwards, the newly formed United States Air Force began plans to integrate its units as early as 1947, and in 1948, President Harry Truman enacted Executive Order Number 9981, which directed equality of treatment and opportunity to all in the United States Armed Forces. This order, in time, led to the end of racial segregation in the military forces. This was also the first step toward racial integration in the United States of America.

Beyond a doubt, the positive experience, the outstanding record of accomplishments and the superb behavior of the black airmen during World War II, and after, were important factors leading up to the historical social change that led to racial equality in America.

The Tuskegee Airmen will live on forever in the pages of history because they accepted the challenge proudly, and succeeded in proving to the world that blacks could fly. These men fought two wars—one against a military enemy force overseas and another one against racism at home.

I am reminded of the words of the first President of the United States, George Washington, whose words are worth repeating at this time:

"The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional as to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their country."

Thank you for your service for your country and your continued service for your fellow veteran in these difficult times we all endure.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 17, 2012*

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, due to a commitment in my district, I had to miss votes on H.R. 3408. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on Amendment 13, "aye" on Amendment 15, "no" on Amendment 16, "aye" on Amendment 17, "aye" on Amendment 18, "no" on Amendment 19, "aye" on the Motion to Recommit, and "no" on Final Passage.